

Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) Annual Report

Summer Quarter, 2011 – Spring Quarter, 2012

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The University's *Code of Student Conduct* defines academic misconduct as "any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university, or subvert the educational process" (Faculty Rule 3335-23-04[A]). The Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) is charged with maintaining the University's academic integrity by investigating and adjudicating "all reported cases of student academic misconduct, with the exception of cases in a professional college having a published honor code, and [in instances where a student has violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct*] deciding upon suitable disciplinary action" (University Rule 3335-5-487[B]). The data for this year's annual report consists of cases resolved from June 14, 2011 to June 18, 2012, and the report follows the templates for reporting developed by previous COAM chairs and coordinators. Links to previous annual reports may be found on the COAM website (<http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html>).

COAM is composed of 18 faculty members, seven graduate students (appointed by CGS), and seven undergraduate students (appointed by USG). The work of COAM is facilitated by the Coordinator who (1) receives and processes allegations of academic misconduct, (2) notifies students of allegations of academic misconduct, (3) consults with students and faculty regarding allegations of academic misconduct, (4) schedules hearings to resolve allegations of academic misconduct, and (5) notifies students and faculty of the outcomes of these hearings.

Every student accused of academic misconduct has the right to a hearing before a panel of COAM. A panel consists of at least four members of COAM, and the rules require that each panel have at least two faculty representatives and one student representative. The panel serves as an impartial hearing body that hears evidence and determines (1) if a student has violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct* and (2) an appropriate sanction in cases where a student is found "in violation." If a student agrees with the allegations of academic misconduct and waives his/her right to a hearing, he/she may have the allegations resolved as an administrative decision. For an administrative decision, a member of

COAM, typically the COAM Coordinator, serves as a hearing officer and determines appropriate sanctions.

I. SUMMARY OF CASES RESOLVED

During the 2011-2012 academic year, COAM resolved 531 cases of alleged academic misconduct. Of the cases resolved, 64% were resolved as administrative decisions and 36% were resolved as panel hearings (**Table 1**). Females and males represented 41% and 59%, respectively, of the cases resolved (**Table 2**).

Table 1.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Total Cases Resolved and Method of Resolution
2011-2012 Academic Year

	Number of Cases	% of Total Cases
Administrative Decisions	338	64
Panel Hearings	193	36
Totals	531	100

Table 2.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Total Cases Resolved and Student's Gender
2011-2012 Academic Year

Gender	Number of Cases	% of Total Cases
Female	220	41
Male	311	59
Totals	531	100

Of the cases resolved by COAM this past year, 481 (91%) resulted in verdicts of “in violation.” The rates at which males and females were found “in violation” of the *Code of Student Conduct* were similar, 90% for females and 91% for males (**Table 3**).

Table 3.
Committee on Academic Misconduct

Distribution of Cases Resolved Based on Students' Gender and Verdict 2011-2012 Academic Year

Gender	Students Found "Not In Violation"	Students Found "In Violation"	Total Cases	% In Violation (% of Total for Gender)
Female	22	198	220	90
Male	28	283	311	91
Totals	50	481	531	91

II. SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT CHARGES

When allegations of academic misconduct arise, a student often does not know or understand what he/she has allegedly done wrong. Since COAM desires that the hearing process be an educational process, the Coordinator charges the student with violating the Code of Student Conduct using terminology that explains the nature of the behavior that led to the allegations. Table 4 summarizes information on academic misconduct charges for the 2011-2012 academic year. The left column is a list of the charges used most commonly by COAM. The "Number of Students" column lists the total number of students charged with a particular violation, and the "% of Total" column lists the "Number of Students" as a percentage of the total charges (1226). The last two columns list the number of students found "in violation" (Number IV) of each charge and the number of students found "in violation" of each charge as a percentage of the total number of students charged. For example, of 210 students charged with plagiarism, 205 (98%) were found "in violation."

Students are often charged with and found "in violation" of more than one charge. Thus, the total number of charges (1226) exceeds the total cases resolved by COAM (531), and the total for "Number IV" (IV=In Violation) (1102) exceeds the actual number of students found "in violation" (481).

The relatively low values for the percentages of students found "in violation" of unauthorized collaboration and copying are potentially misleading. They result because COAM often treats the charges of "copying" and "unauthorized collaboration" as mutually exclusive. In many of the cases where COAM receives information alleging that one student may have copied the work of another

student, it's not clear which student (if any) copied and whether or not there was collusion (working together in an unauthorized manner). Thus, in many of these cases, all of the students involved are charged with copying and unauthorized collaboration, but, if found "in violation," they are found "in violation" of only copying or unauthorized collaboration. In other words, copying is considered to be a unilateral act, where one student copies from another, whereas unauthorized collaboration involves two students working together.

"Failure to comply with course/program policies/guidelines" generally accompanies the other more specific charges, and so a student who is found in violation on a specific charge will also be found-by entailment—in violation of course policy. In the majority of COAM cases, charges against students stem from the failure to follow course guidelines, and this charge may be used by itself alone if the allegations stem directly from a failure to follow course guidelines.

Table 4.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Charges for Which Students Were Found
“In Violation” of the University’s *Code of Student Conduct*
2011-2012 Academic Year

Charge	Number of Students	% of Total	Number IV	% IV
Plagiarism	210	17	205	98
Copying the work of another and representing it as one's own work	152	12	120	79
Unauthorized collaboration by sharing information during an academic activity in an unauthorized, deceitful, or fraudulent manner	165	13	138	84
Failure to comply with course/program policies and/or guidelines	523	43	473	90
Submission of work not performed in a course	27	2	23	85
Possession or use of unauthorized materials during an academic activity	28	2	23	82
Forgery	26	2	26	100
Alteration and resubmission of course materials in an attempt to change the earned credit or grade	8	1	8	100
Engaging in an activity that places other students at an academic disadvantage	50	4	50	100
Serving as or enlisting the assistance of a substitute during the completion of an academic activity	1	0	1	100
Providing falsified materials, documents, or records to a university official in order to academic qualifications, criteria, or requirements	36	3	35	97
Totals	1226	100	1102	90

III. SUMMARY OF CASES BASED ON STUDENT'S ENROLLMENT UNIT AND THE INITIATING UNIT

Over 20 *enrollment* units on campus were represented by the cases resolved by COAM during the past year (**Table 5**), but the students from four enrollment units (College of Engineering [ENG], Undergraduate Student Academic Services [USAS], College of Social and Behavioral Sciences [SBS], and College of Business [BUS]), when combined, accounted for over half (57%) of all cases.

The cases heard by COAM during the past year were *initiated* from over 70 units across the University (**Table 6**), with the combined cases from Computer Science and Engineering (8.1% of all cases), Chemistry (7.5%), Engineering (7.0%), and Biology (7.0%) accounting for 30% of the total cases.

Table 5.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Student's Enrollment Unit
2011-2012 Academic Year

Enrollment Unit	Total for Enrollment Unit	% of All Cases
AGR/ENR (College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences)	17	3
AHR (School of Architecture)	6	1
AMP (School of Allied Medical Professions)	9	2
ART (College of Art)	6	1
ASC (Colleges of the Arts and Sciences)	8	2
ATI (Agricultural Technical Institute)	1	0
BIO (College of Biological Sciences)	35	7
BUS (College of Business)	85	16
CED (Continuing Education)	1	0
EHE (College of Education and Human Ecology)	34	6
ENG (College of Engineering)	97	18
EXP (Exploration Program)	48	9
GRD (Graduate School)	30	6
HUM (College of Humanities)	13	2
MPS (College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences)	31	6
MUS (School of Music)	1	0
NUR (College of Nursing)	8	2
PHR (College of Pharmacy)	2	0
SBS (College of Social and Behavioral Sciences)	62	12
SWK (College of Social Work)	7	1
USAS (Undergraduate Student Academic Services)	22	4

Other	8	2
Totals	531	100

Table 6.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Initiating Unit
2011-2012 Academic Year

Course (Department)	Number of Cases	% of Total
ACCT&MIS [Accounting and Management Information Systems]	12	2.2
ALLI MED [Allied Medicine]	1	0.2
ANATOMY	8	1.5
ANIM SCI [Animal Sciences]	2	0.4
ANTHROP [Anthropology]	10	1.9
ARABIC	11	2.1
ARCH [Architecture]	1	0.2
ART	2	0.4
ART EDUC [Art Education]	1	0.2
BIOCHEM [Biochemistry]	1	0.2
BIOLOGY	38	7.0
BUS ADMIN [Business Administration]	6	1.1
BUS - MGT [Business Administration: Management Science]	20	3.8
BUS TECH	1	0.2
CHBE [Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering]	1	0.2
CHEM [Chemistry]	40	7.5
CIVIL ENVIRON [Civil Environmental Engineering & Geodetic Science]	7	1.3
COMM [Communications]	8	1.5
COMP STD [Comparative Studies in the Humanities]	9	1.6
CS&E [Computer Science and Engineering]	43	8.1
ECE [Electrical and Computer Engineering]	6	1.1

Course (Department)	Number of Cases	% of Total
ECON [Economics]	10	1.9
EDU P&L [Education: Educational Policy and Leadership]	2	0.4
EDU PAES [Education: Physical Activity and Education Services]	8	1.5
EDU T&L [Education: Teaching and Learning]	5	0.9
EEOB [Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology]	2	0.4
ENGINEER [Engineering]	37	7.0
ENGLISH	16	3.0
ENR	2	0.4
ENV SCI [Environmental Sciences]	1	0.2
EXP [Exploration Program]	5	.9
FD SC&TE [Food Science and Technology]	2	0.4
French & Italian	5	.9
GEOG [Geography]	8	1.5
GERMAN	3	0.6
H&CS [Horticulture and Crop Science]	1	0.2
HDFS [Human Development and Family Science]	2	0.4
HEBREW [Hebrew]	1	0.2
HIST ART [History of Art]	1	0.2
HISTORY	16	3.0
HORT CROP SCI	1	0.2
HUMN NTR [Human Nutrition and Food Management]	3	0.6
INT STDS [International Studies]	1	0.2
ISE [Integrated Systems Engineering]	7	1.3
JOHN GLENN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS	9	1.7
LARCH [Landscape Architecture]	1	0.2
LATIN	1	0.2
LINGUIST [Linguistics]	10	1.9

Course (Department)	Number of Cases	% of Total
MATH [Mathematics]	18	3.4
MATSC&EN [Material Science and Engineering]	1	0.2
MBA [Masters of Business Administration]	1	0.2
MECH ENG [Mechanical Engineering]	10	1.9
MICROBIOL [Microbiology]	6	1.1
MOL GEN [Molecular Genetics}	1	0.2
MUSIC	5	0.9
NURSING	1	0.2
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	1	0.2
PHILOS [Philosophy]	2	0.4
PHYSICS	5	0.9
POLIT SC [Political Science]	9	1.7
PORTGESE [Portuguese]	1	0.2
PSYCH [Psychology]	13	2.4
SCANDNAV [Scandinavian]	1	0.2
SOC WORK [Social Work]	7	1.3
SOCIOL [Sociology]	11	2.1
SPANISH	13	2.4
SPH/HRNG [Speech and Hearing Science]	1	0.2
STAT [Statistics]	13	2.4
THEATRE	8	1.5
USAS [Undergraduate Student Academic Services]	2	0.4
WGSS [Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies]	6	1.1
WOM STDS [Women's Studies]	2	0.4
OTHER	5	0.9
TOTALS	531	100

IV. SUMMARY OF CASES BASED ON STUDENT'S RANK AND

COURSE LEVEL

Forty percent of the cases resolved by COAM during the past year were the result of allegations of misconduct in 100-level courses, and nearly two thirds of the cases stemmed from 100- and 200-level courses. Fewer cases resulted from allegations in progressively higher-level courses (**Table 7**).

Table 8 summarized the cases resolved for undergraduate students only (i.e., ranks 1 through 4). The data demonstrate that students in progressively higher class ranks tended to be charged with academic misconduct in progressively higher level courses. For example, almost all cases involving rank 1 students occurred in 100 and 200-level courses (90 of 99 cases = 91%), while 68% of the cases involving rank 4 students occurred in courses at the 300-level and above (105 of 155 cases = 68%).

Table 7.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Course Level (Number)
2011-2012 Academic Year

Course Level	Cases	% of Total
000	0	0.0
100	210	40
200	118	22
300	43	8
400	33	6
500	47	9
600	53	10
700	13	2
800	4	1
900	2	0
Other	8	2
Totals	531	100

Table 8.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Distribution of Cases Based on Student Rank and Course Level
2011-2012 Academic Year

(The following table includes data for only ranks 1, 2, 3, and 4 students who were charged with academic misconduct in a formal course. Thus, the data in this table represent 493 of the 531 total cases resolved during the past academic year.)

	Class Rank				
Course Level	1	2	3	4	Totals
000	0	0	0	0	0
100	63	73	50	23	209
200	27	38	25	27	117
300	1	13	12	17	43
400	6	0	10	17	33
500	0	2	7	37	46
600	2	0	9	30	41
700	0	0	0	4	4
Totals	99	126	113	155	493

V. Summary of Disciplinary and Grade Sanctions

When COAM finds that a student has violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, COAM imposes sanctions. The sanction nearly always includes a disciplinary component, and, in a majority of cases, the sanction also includes an authorization for a grade-related component.

The disciplinary sanctions imposed by COAM and the numbers of cases involved are summarized in **Table 9**. As these data demonstrate, most students found in violation of the *Code of Student Conduct* received a sanction of "disciplinary probation."

Table 9.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Disciplinary Sanctions
2011-2012 Academic Year

(Of the 531 cases resolved during the 2011-2012 Academic Year, 481 resulted in a finding of "In Violation," and only these resulted in a disciplinary sanction.)

Disciplinary Sanction	Number of Cases	% of Cases
Formal reprimand	84	17
Disciplinary probation (range = 1 term to "until graduation")	358	74
Suspension (range = 1 to 3 terms)	35	7
Dismissal	3	1
None	1	0
Totals	481	100

The grade sanctions imposed by COAM and the numbers of cases involved are summarized in **Table 10**. As these data demonstrate, the modal grade sanction for students found "in violation" of the University's *Code of Student Conduct* is an authorization for a "0" on the assignment. Forty-six percent of the cases received an authorization of a reduction in the student's final grade greater than a "0" on the assignment; eighteen percent received an authorization for a final grade of "E" or "U" in the course.

Table 10.
Committee on Academic Misconduct
Summary of Grade Sanctions
2011-2012 Academic Year

(Of the 531 cases resolved during the 2011-2012 Academic Year, 481 resulted in a finding of "In Violation." In 21 of these cases, no grade sanction was authorized.

Grade Sanction	Number of Cases	% of Cases
None	21	4
Authorization for a "0" on the assignment	237	49
Authorization for a reduction in the student's final course grade	135	28
Authorization for a final grade of "E" or "U" in the course	87	18
Other	1	0
Totals	481	100